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ABSTRACT

This document is a compilation of activities for a multiethnic approach to teaching. It begins with points to consider when creating a multiethnic atmosphere in the classroom. Next are suggestions for the learning environment. One of the suggestions is to display items as a source of stimulation for conversation and writing, such as photo-of-the-week, quote-of-the-week, or a bulletin board of poems by American poets of various ethnic backgrounds. Examples of these are included. A list of simulations and games and their sources is then presented. Five activities are then described along with the purpose for the activity and teaching hints. For example, the purpose of one of the activities is to help the student appreciate music as a form of communication which reflects people's feelings and generates concerns of the times. The activity involves listening to various types of music on a particular theme and analyzing the content. Lists of sources of free and inexpensive materials, journals, and newspapers that can be obtained, and do's and don'ts for teachers in multicultural settings are then listed. An article on identifying racism in school books completes this document. (RC)

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MULTI-ETHNIC APPROACHES TO TEACHING

IOWA ASCD

October 20, 1975

CONNIE EARHART

MIDWEST CENTER FOR EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

CREATING A MULTI-ETHNIC ATMOSPHERE:
POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. Can you increase your own awareness? Continue your own education by finding what's available in the local library, through the staff of local colleges and universities, through the Midwest Center for Euqal Educational Opportunity, in newspapers, magazines, etc.

2. Check your textbooks for minority content.
   a. Who is represented? Whites only? Whites and Blacks only?
   b. If a story deals with a minority theme, what qualifies the author or illustrator to deal with this topic? If they are not members of the minority being written about, is there anything in the author's or illustrator's background that would specifically recommend them for this book?
   c. Are controversial as well as conservative authors included? (Eldridge Cleaver as well as Booker T. Washington?)

3. Check your school library. Are supplementary materials available?

4. Consider, if possible, using paperbacks and newspapers instead of or as supplements to standardized texts. Also consider a multi-media approach; use records, magazines, television, tapes, radio.

5. Are there people in the community who might be resources for your class? Perhaps a culture center could provide someone to present a non-stereotyped view of a group.

6. Consider your expectations from your students. Not all students are on the same ability level. And minority students may have a different approach to education than White students. For example, Black students may be more effective in oral than written presentations. Can you adapt your methods?

7. Consider your approach as a teacher.
   a. Do you test for facts or for comprehension? Is it more valuable to students to know when and where the Massacre at Wounded Knee occurred or how the survivors reacted to it?
   b. Is your approach thematic or chronological? Might a change in approach help in any way?
   c. Are your class discussions and activities always teacher-centered? Or do you encourage your students to work on their own and develop critical thinking skills?
   d. Do you simulate life as much as possible? Consider the importance of the media on students, especially after their formal education is finished. Will you have helped them to continue their views? Will they be able to distinguish between accurate and inaccurate representations of people and events? Will they, in effect, believe everything they read and hear or will they be able to judge for themselves?
   e. Consider your interaction with your students. Biased treatment of different students can destroy any value in an integrated curriculum.

8. Do you offer students a chance to help you plan the course of study? If students can understand why this course is valuable to them, and have a hand in creating it, might they then feel more involved in it?

9. Consider having your students evaluate their own classroom materials for bias. Or have them evaluate television programs, newspapers, magazines (including advertising).

10. Is your physical classroom atmosphere multi-ethnic (bulletin boards, etc.)?

11. Do you deal only with classics or are contemporary authors also studied? Good comparisons can result, for example, from a study of changing attitudes among minority authors.

12. Keep in mind why the various aspects of English are important to your students. Consider too how it relates to other disciplines. Especially where literature is concerned, you might create an inter-disciplinary approach and study what was happening in history at the time a piece was written and if events had any effect on the art. Also consider the possible use of foreign language input (especially for Chicano studies).

13. Are you making the most of your materials budget? Should you have one copy of a source for every student if some of them can't handle it successfully?

14. Consider field trips to museums, homes, businesses, with ethnic or multi-ethnic atmospheres.

15. Do you share resources with other teachers?

16. Do you keep an original file of multi-ethnic, multi-racial resources?

17. Do you share ideas with administrators and parents?

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

When an individual walks into the classroom whether it be student or teacher the tone for interaction is set. Hopefully, a warm, multi-ethnic environment will encourage those who meet in this room to feel comfortable to be themselves.

I. The following items displayed in the classroom may be a constant changing source of stimulation for conversation and writing:

Photo - of - the - week
Cartoon - of - the - week
Quote - of - the - week
Advertisement - of - the - week
Collage - of - the - week
Joke - of - the - week

Students should be encouraged to look to each other as well as the teacher for resource in developing a multi-ethnic environment. Your class may wish to designate its own system to insure contributions from all class members. Make books, magazines, newspapers an inexpensive camera and a variety of other materials available to assist students in completing this assignment. The aforementioned activity is an especially good way to provide a successful learning experience for those students who are not usually high achievers in English.

SAMPLES: Quote - of - the - week

take
off
your
mask
before
entering
my
house
for
I
don't
want
a
stranger
in
my
room

Ruben Rodriguez

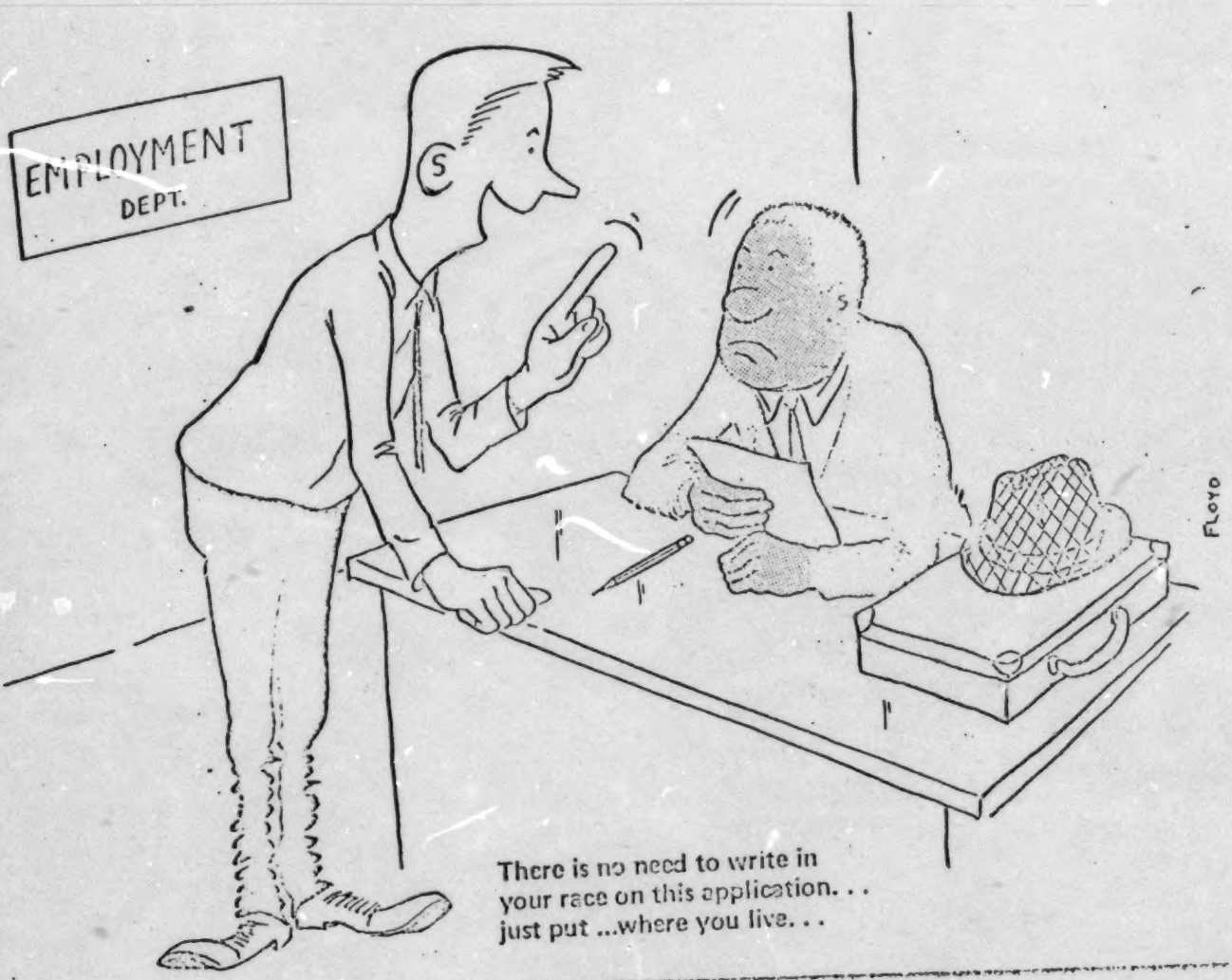
A.

Though I am different
from you,
We were born involved
in one another.

— Tao Ch'ien

B.

C. Cartoon - of - the - week

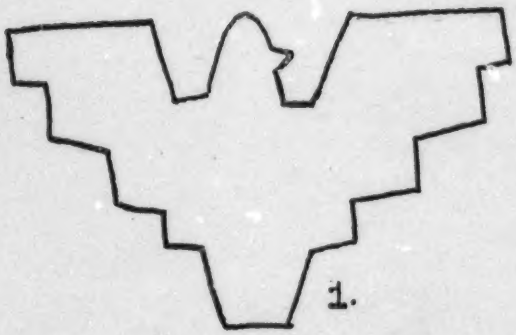


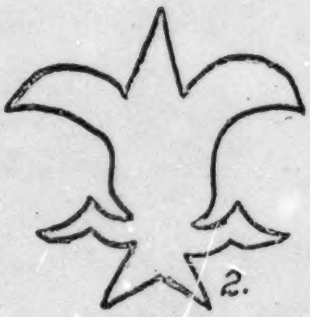
There is no need to write in your race on this application. . . just put ...where you live. . .

II. If you turn the page and look at the next two sheets you will find the art layout and content for the Multi-Ethnic bulletin board American Poets that was discussed during our presentation.

You may construct the bulletin board as it is presented or use it to stimulate your own creativity.

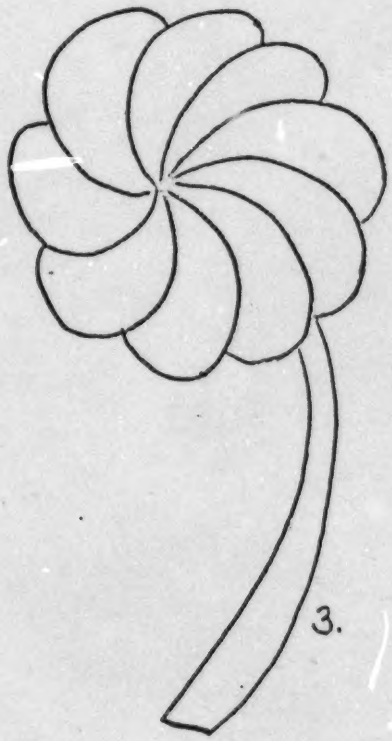
It is not always necessary to have three or four racial or ethnic groups in each display. Occasionally this is a good idea to reinforce the concept that we live in a pluralistic society, but you might also want to concentrate on one group at a time. The important thing to remember is to make the students' overall classroom experience multi-ethnic.

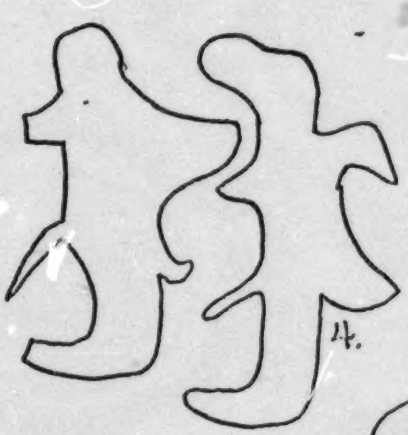


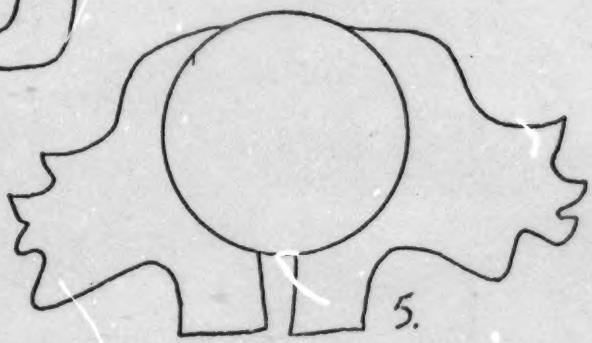


AMERICAN

POETS







"I Am Joaquin"

I am the masses of my people and
I refuse to be absorbed
I am Joaquin
The odds are great
but my spirit is strong
My faith is unbreakable...
I SHALL ENDURE!
I WILL ENDURE!
Rodolfo Gonzales

1

Dreams

As my eyes
Search
the prairie
I feel the summer
in the spring
Chippewa

2

AMERICAN POETS

There is only one man in the world
and his name is All Men.
There is only one woman in the world
and her name is All Women.
There is only one child in the world
and the child's name is All Children.
Carl Sandburg

3

When the plant dies, most
Blame the earth. Some blame the sun
But few blame the seed.
john eng

4

Motto

I play it cool
And dig all jive-
That's the reason
I stay alive.

My motto,
As I live and learn
Is
Dig and be dug
In return.
Langston Hughes

5

SIMULATIONS AND GAMES

Some of the advantages of using simulations and games compared to the traditional lecture or teacher centered approached are:

1. To promote interaction among students. At other times a simulation or game may be used as an independent activity, thus occasionally relieving the teacher to perform other duties.

2. To involve the student directly in the learning process. Pedagogically, it seems obvious that a student would learn more by doing than by listening.

3. To allow the game role to act as a mask behind which players may feel free to act out deep seated biases, fears, and ambitions that they would not normally discuss in a classroom situation.

4. To simulate learning from a real life situation rather than from an accumulation of abstract facts.

Listed below are simulations and games you may wish to use to promote a better understanding of self and others.

I. Starpower:

1969, Western Behavioral Sciences Institute, $25.00;
Available from: Social Studies School Service
10000 Culver Boulevard
Culver City, California 90230

A simulation in which students build a low-mobility three tiered society through the distribution of wealth, in the form of chips. Participants attempt to achieve a higher level in society by acquiring wealth through trading with other participants. Provides a good basis for discussion and research on various types of discrimination and group dynamics. (Easy to make yourself.)

II. Tell It Like It Is!! The Ungame

1972, Av-Vid, Incorporated, $7.95;
Available from: Av-Vid
P.O. Box 964
Garden Grove, California 92624

A game designed to help people learn to communicate more effectively by drawing out the participants' true thoughts and feelings regarding his/her self concept.

III. Many of your students may not have an appreciation of how difficult it is to function in school and society if a person's dominant language is not standard English. One way to simulate this concept is to distribute a handout written in Spanish to be read for the class the next day.

These handouts may be obtained from several non-profit organizations such as the National Dairy Council and various social agencies or you may wish to develop your own.

Some students may respond, "But I don't know how to read Spanish." Maintain a stance that the information in the handout is extremely important and this is the only form available. Emphasize to the class that they will be graded on class participation.

If you continue to receive frustrated comments, be firm in reminding the class that each individual will just have to do the best he/she can in interpreting the assignment.

The next day begin the discussion concerning the handout. Then ask how many completed the assignment, why or why not. Eventually the students should be able, in their own words to relate this simulation to the language discrimination that takes place in society.

An alternate way to promote a discussion on language discrimination is briefly discribed below:

(This activity requires someone who is able and willing to use non-standard English with some ease, even in a rather formal situation.) Have the non-standard speaker assume the role of teacher, leading the class in a discussion of any topice of general interest. The members of the class are expected to use non-standard English, and the "teacher" corrects any lapses into standard English. Discuss the difficulty of trying to use another dialect and the feelings of participants.

SAMPLE:

The following passage is an example of material that might be used in Exercise III:

Hemos sufrido males e injusticias en el nombre de la ley. Nuestros hombres, mujeres y niños, han sufrido no sólo las brutalidades del trabajo en los campos, y las injusticias mas patentes del sistema, sino también la desesperación de saber que el sistema beneficia la avaricia de hombres sin conciencia, y no a nosotros.*

We have suffered unnumbered ills and crimes in the name of the Law of the land. Our men, women and children have suffered not only the basic brutality of stoop labor, and the most obvious injustices of the system; they have also suffered the desperation of knowing that that system caters to the greed of callous men and not to our needs.*

*From BASTA!, Farm Worker Press, Inc., Delano, California

FREEDOM OF CHOICE ACTIVITIES:

Free to be you and me is not just the title of a [illegible]lm on sexism. This statement says to all of us as teachers and learners that providing options allows individuals to develop more fully in a wide variety of areas by sharing feelings and findings in a comfortable and creative manner. Allowing for uniqueness provides more students with the opportunity to be successful as well as providing a less threatening atmosphere for student to explore the unknown.

I. Who Wrote Which Story?

Purpose of activity: Student is to understand that an individual's writing is affected by past experiences and is to be able to apply this concept to analyzing others' work.

This activity is to be performed in a group of seven. (One student facilitator, 3 writers and 3 interviewers.) The students in the group may determine who will play which roles by their own process.

The three writers will write a story (no longer than [illegible] sentences) about a black man seeking employment.

While these three members of the group are constructing stories, the three interviewers will be composing questions to ask all 3 writers. The questions will be used in an interview format to establish which story was written by which one of the three writers. The interviewers' questions should only be related to the writers' childhoods.

The activity begins with the facilitator instructing the two groups of their tasks and then proceeds with the reading of the three stories, the interviews, deciding which individual wrote which story, and finally processing the students' comprehension of the entire activity by their replying as a group to questions by the teacher.

Teaching Hints:

a. The situation may prove to be less threatening, if interviews are done on a rotating, one-to-one basis and then discussed as a total group.
b. Remember this is a freedom of choice activity for students to elect to do on their own. If the information is in a packet form this will make the activity appear more student centered.

II. Minority-Majority News Accounts

Purpose of activity: 1) To encourage a student to consider various sources and points of view before deciding on his/her point of view. 2) To analyze why view points may differ by considering who controls and/or writes for a specific source.

This activity may be performed by an individual or in pairs. Have the student select a specific current event that has a considerable impact on a racial or ethnic minority. Then by using one of the minority publications listed on the resource sheet in the back of this booklet (or a publication of your choice) compare articles on the same topic. The student may wish to make a chart to compile the points of view.

Teaching Hints:

a. Possible probing questions: How are the articles similar? On what points do they differ? What effect would this have on people only reading a majority paper? Could reading only a majority newspaper cause prejudicial attitudes on the part of the minority person as well as the majority individual? How do you think history was recorded, by the majority's report or was history told from various view points for the reader to decide?

b. As an extension of this idea of reading and discussing news accounts from majority and minority newspapers, ask students to write a report of an event in which they have played an assigned role (could grow out at a simulation) and later reverse roles and compare reports.

III. Picture Search

Purpose: Recognize that some minority groups do not get positive media coverage due to omission or distortion; therefore as a result there may be a lack of positive role models and damage to the self concept for some individual members of a specific minority group.

Students may elect to collect pictures of people from various racial groups to use in bulletin board displays throughout the year.

Teaching Hints:

a.) This could lead to a research and interviewing activity about who owns and controls most of the media. (See "Minorities and the Mass Media," a pamphlet of the Foundation for Change.) Waht are the implications of your findings? A display of learning center might be constructed by the student or students involved in this project to share the results of their findings with other students.

IV. Don't miss the message 'cause you're Digging the Beat

Purpose: Appreciate music as a form of communication which reflects people's feelings and generates concerns of the times.

Students who listen to radios and steros several hours of the day may gain great enjoyment from the mood the beat conveys. Since most students enjoy some type of music, this auditory medium may be a great teaching tool in your learning situation. Perhaps you might like to concentrate on one particular theme such as Equality For All. Records such as "I Am Woman" by Helen Reddy, "half Breed" by Chere and "Inner City Blues" by Marvin Gaye are just a few of the songs that reflect a pluralistic concern for Equality.

Students could share their own records plus an individual might opt, as part of classroom credit, to tape some of the songs heard on the radio and analyze content (have records available for those students who don't have any).

It might be interesting to compare not only the types of music one hears on different stations but to compare the similarity and differences in the themes of the music on these different stations. The themes of "old folks" music may be surprisingly similar to those of rock music yet a different style may be used to get the content across.

Teaching Hints:

a.) If a small group is doing some variation of this activity there may be a noise problem with the music, therefore be prepared.

b.) Alternative activity or study in depth: notice the type of music used on TV or in Movies to protray a certain effect.

Symbolically diagram the music in relationship to the plot.

V. Putting It All Together

Purpose: Through the use of a multi-media approach students will have an opportunity to use various senses to convey a message. Students will be able to apply basic writing and critical thinking skills to develop finished product.

A group of students may wish to construct a slide presentation as a final project. This would combine knowledge gained and individual creativity to make a multi-ethnic comment for future classes. Topics would include the use of writing skills, research know-how, matching of mediums (slides/music), voice (diction), and evaluation procedures. One might be called Prejudice-You Got Me Right Where It Hurts, an analysis of a specific poem or comparison of two poems through slide presentation of the poem, with a musical background, while the poem is being read. One other idea might be to have students compile biographies of important writers and have groups of five members present a 5 minute visual and auditory comment on each writer and why he/she feels this person is outstanding. The total group project would then be 25-30 minutes long.

The possibilities are exciting and endless. Give the students a chance and a budget. You might find the creative multi-media work the students develop is more valuable for your situation, less expensive, and personally more relevant than commercial productions.

Teaching Hints: Let your restrictions be known from the outset. Dare to become another resource and not the activity center. Most of all have fun.

Sources of Free and Inexpensive Materials to Buy or Borrow:

Midwest Center for Equal Educational Opportunity University of Missouri-Columbia 408 Hitt Street Columbia, Missouri 65201	Consult MCEEO's Multi-Ethnic bibliography for films, photo-aides, sound recordings, games, books, etc., you may borrow.
Foundation For Change, Inc. 1841 Broadway (60 Street) New York, New York 10023 (212) 765-2074	Classroom sets of these pamphlets are available free of charge: Minorities and the Police, Definitions of Racism, Chicano and Proud, Minorities and the News Media, Indian and Proud Black Women are Proud. Write for a complete list.
United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs 1961 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Washington, D. C. 20242	Articles on language, music, origin, legends and myths, religions and ceremonials, food and cookery. Write for additional information.
United Nations Public Inquires Unit Office of Public Information United Nations New York, New York 10023	Information available on a variety of countries. Write and tell specifically what you are studying.
Interracial Books For Children 1841 Broadway New York, New York 10023	Publication that reviews books for sexism and racism. Often includes useful evaluation tools.
NAACP 1790 Broadway New York, New York 10023 (212) 245-2100	A variety of information concerning black people.
Toward Quality Education for Mexican-Americans Report 6 (1974) U. S. Commission on Civil Right Washington, D. C. 20425	Report of general interest concerning the status of education of the Mexican American.
Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'rith 537 Securities Building Omaha, Nebraska 68102	A variety of materials about discrimination. Emphasis on Jewish people, but other minority groups are included. Write for information on specific areas.

Magazines, Newspapers and Journals

Jet Magazine
Johnson Publishing Company, Inc.
820 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605
(Published Weekly $16.00/yr.)

Ebony Magazine
Johnson Publishing Company, Inc.
820 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605
(12 Issues $8.00)

Ebony Jr.
Johnson Publishing Company, Inc.
820 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605
(10 Issues $6.00)

Iowa Bystander (Black Weekly Newspaper)
Post Office Box 491
West Des Moines
Des Moines, Iowa 50265
(Published Weekly $5.00/yr.)

Kansas City Call
1715 East 18th
Kansas City, Mo.

Argus
4595 Martin Luther King
St. Louis, Mo.

The Journal of Negro Education
Bureau of Educational Research
Howard University Press
Howard University
Washington, D. C. 20001
(Published Quarterly $5.00)

The Bay Leaf
110 North Castanya Way
Menlo Park, California 94025
(10 Issues Sept. to June $3.00 1-10 Subscriptions, $2.00 11-49 Subscriptions)

Wassaja (A National Newspaper of Indian America)
American Indian Historical Society
1451 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco, California 94117
(Published Monthly $10.00/yr.)

Sentinal Bulletin
The National Congress of American Indians
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.
(Published Monthly $5.00/yr.)

The Indian Historian
1451 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco, California 94117
(Published Quarterly $5.00)

Akwesasne Notes
Mohawk Nation Via Rooseveltown
New York, New York 13683
(Highly recommended - I have no price information at the present).

For General Information on American Indian Publications Write:

The American Indian Press Association
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Suite 203
Washington, D. C. 20036

El Grito: Journal of Contemporary Mexican American Thought
Quinto Sol Publications, Inc.
P. O. Box 9275
Berkeley, California 94709
(4 Issues $5.00/yr.)

Selected Materials on Los Chicanos by Jaun Gomez
(Lists suggested newspapers, journals, studies, etc. concerning Mexican Americans) available from:

Commission for Mexican American Affairs
Cultural Distribution Center
1514 Buena Vista Street
San Antonio, Texas 78207

The Secretary National Geographic Society
P. O. Box 2895
Washington, D. C.
(Published Monthly $7.50/yr.)

DOs and DON'Ts FOR TEACHERS IN MULTICULTURAL SETTINGS

DOs

1. Do use the same scientific approach to gain background information on the culture of multiethnic groups as you would to tackle a complicated course in science, mathematics, or any subject area in which you might be deficient.

2. Do engage in systematic study of the disciplines that provide insight into the cultural heritage, political struggle, contributions, and present-day problems of minority groups.

3. Do try to develop sincere personal relationships with minorities. You can't teach strangers! Don't give up because one black or other minority person rejects your efforts. All groups have sincere individuals who welcome honest, warm relationships with members of another race. Seek out those who will accept or tolerate you. This coping skill is one that minorities have always used.

4. Do recognize that there are often more differences within a group than between two groups. If we recognize diversity among races, we must also recognize diversity within groups.

5. Do remember that there are many ways to gain insight into a group. Visit their churches, homes, communities; read widely and listen to various segments of the group.

6. Do remember that no one approach and no one answer will assist you in meeting the educational needs of all children in a multicultural society.

7. Do select instructional materials that are accurate and free of stereotypes.

8. Do remember that there is a positive relationship between teacher expectation and academic progress.

9. Do provide an opportunity for minority group boys and girls and children from the mainstream to interact in a positive intellectual setting on a continous basis.

10. Do use a variety of materials and especially those that utilize positive, true-to-life experiences.

11. Do provide some structure and direction to children who have unstructured lives, primarily children of the poor.

12. Do expose all children to a wide variety of literature as a part of your cultural sensitivity program.

13. "Do remember that in spite of the fact that ethnic groups often share many common problems their specific needs are diverse."

14. "Do utilize the rich resources within your own classroom among various cultural groups."

15. Do remember that human understanding is a lifetime endeavor. You must continue to study and provide meaningful experiences of your pupils.

16. "Do remember to be honest with yourself. If you can't adjust to children from multicultural homes get out of the classroom."

DON'Ts

1. Don't rely on elementary school textbooks, teachers' guides, and brief essays to become informed on minorities. Research and resources will be needed.

2. Don't use ignorance as an excuse for not having any insight into the problems and culture of Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, Asian Americans, and other minorities.

3. Don't rely on the "expert" judgement of one minority person for the answer to all the complicated racial and social problems of his/her people. For example, Blacks, Mexicans, Indians, and Puerto Ricans hold various political views on all issues.

4. Don't be fooled by popular slogans and propaganda intended to raise the national consciousness of an oppressed people.

5. Don't get carried away with the "save the world concept." Most minorities have their own savior.

6. Don't be afraid to learn from those who are more familiar with the mores and cultures than you.

7. Don't assume that you have all the answers for solving the other man's problems. It is almost impossible for an outsider to be an expert on the culture of another group.

8. Don't assume that all minority group children are culturally deprived.

9. Don't develop a fatalistic attitude about the progress of minority group pupils.

10. Don't resegregate pupils through tracking and ability-grouping gimmicks.

11. Don't give up when minority group pupils seem to hate school.

12. Don't assume that minorities are the only pupils who should have multicultural instructional materials. Children in the mainstream can be culturally deprived in terms of their knowledge and understanding of other people and their own heritage.

13. Don't go around asking parents and children personal questions in the name of research. Why must they divulge their suffering? It is obvious.

14. Don't get hung up on grade designation when sharing literature that provides insight into the cultural heritage of a people.

15. "Don't try to be cool by using the vernacular of a particular racial group."

16. Don't make minority children feel ashamed of their language, dress, or traditions.

Dawson, Martha E., "Am I Ready?" in Children and Intercultural Education. Association for Childhood Education International, Part III, 1974. Pp. 52-54.

Identifying Racism: School Books

The following is reprinted with permission from *Interracial Books for Children*, a publication of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, New York.

Both in school and out, your children are being exposed to many books that convey racist and sexist attitudes. These attitudes—expressed over and over by books and other media—gradually distort their perceptions until stereotypes and myths about minorities and women are accepted as reality. It is difficult for parents or a teachers to convince their children to question society's attitudes. But if you can show a child how to detect racism and sexism in a book, the child can proceed to transfer that perception to wider areas. The quidelines below are a starting point.

These fall into two parts. Part I is designed to help you detect racist and sexist bias in storybooks—children's picture books, primers, fiction, etc. Part II deals with school books—social studies, civics, history texts and other reference works. These same concepts can also be applied to adult books and any written material.

PART I: ANALYZING PICTURE AND STORY BOOKS

(1) Check the illustrations.

Look for stereotypes. A stereotype is an oversimplified generalization about a particular group, race, or sex, which generally carries derogatory implications. While you may not always find them in the forms described, look for variations which in any way demean or ridicule characters because of their race or sex.

Look for tokenism. If there are non-white characters, are they just like the white faces but tinted or colored in? Do all minority faces look stereotypically alike or are they depicted as genuine individuals?

Look at the lifestyles. Are minority characters and their setting depicted in such a way that they contrast unfavorably with an unstated norm of white middle class suburbia? For example, minorities are often associated with the ghetto, migrant labor or "primitive" living. If the story does attempt to depict another culture, does it go beyond oversimplifications of reality and offer genuine insights into another lifestyle?

(2) Check the story line.

Civil Rights legislation has led publishers to weed out many insulting passages and illustrations, particularly in stories with black themes, but the attitudes still find expression in less obvious ways. The following checklist suggests some of the various subtle forms of bias to watch for:

Relationships: Do the whites in the story have the power and make the decisions? Do non-white people function in essentially subservient roles?

Standard for success: What does it take for a character to succeed? To gain acceptance, do non-white characters have to exhibit superhuman qualities—excel in sports, get A's, etc.? In friendships between white and non-white children ("brotherhood"), is it the non-white who does most of the understanding and forgiving?

Viewpoint: How are "problems" presented, conceived and resolved in the story? Are minority people themselves considered to be "the problem"? Do solutions ultimately depend on the benevolence of a white person?

Sexism: Are the achievements of girls and women based on their own initiative and intelligence, or is their success due to their good looks or to their relationships with boys? Are sex roles incidental or paramount to characterization and plot? Could the same story be told if the sex roles were reversed?

(3) Consider the effects of the book on the child's self-image and self-esteem.

Are norms established which limit the child's aspirations and self-concepts? What does it do to black children to be continously bombarded with images of white as beautiful, clean, virtuous, etc., and black as evil, dirty, menacing, etc.? What happens to a girl's aspirations when she reads that boys perform all the brave and important deeds? What about a girl's self-esteem if she is not fair of skin and slim of body?

(4) Consider the author's or illustrator's qualifications.

Read the biographical material on the jacket flap or on the back of the book. If a story deals with a minority theme, what qualifies the author or illustrator to deal with this topic? If they are not members of the minority being written about, is there anything in the author's or illustrator's background that would specifically recommend them for this book?

Similarly, a book that has to do with the feelings and insights of women should be more carefully examined if it is written by a man—unless the book's avowed purpose is to present a male viewpoint.

The above observations do not deny the ability of writers to empathize with experiences other than those of their own sex or race, but the chances of their writing as honestly and as authentically about other experiences are not as good.

(5) Look at the copyright date.

Books on minority themes—usually hastily conceived—suddenly began appearing in the mid-1960's. There followed a growing number of "minority experience" books to meet the new market demand, but these were still written by white authors and reflected a white point of view. Only very recently—in the late 1960's and early 1970's—has the children's book world begun to reflect the realities of a multiracial society and it has just begun to reflect feminists' concerns.

The copyright date, therefore, can be a clue as to how likely the book is to be overtly racist or sexist although recent copy-right date, of course, is no guarantee of a book's relevance or sensitivity.

Note that the copyright date only means the year the book was published. It usually takes a minimum of one year—and often much more than that—from the time a book is written before it is actually published. This time lag has meant very little in the past, but in a time of rapidly changing consciousness, when children's book publishing is attempting to be "relevant," it is becoming increasingly significant.

PART II: ANALYZING SCHOOL TEXTS

(6) Determine the author's perspective.

There is no such thing as a truly objective account of history. It is always from some point of view. History and social studies texts have traditionally been written from a white, European, male perspective, and this has influenced what has been included and how it has been "reported." The traditional viewpoint has led to serious omissions and distortions of history, especially concerning minorities and women of all races.

The viewpoints of minorities and women are still largely excluded from most texts. There is, however, more likelihood that a textbook will reflect the realities of a multicultural society if it is not written solely from a white male perspective.

(7) Note the copyright date.

It takes considerably longer to produce a textbook than it does a

storybook—often several years—and therefore texts have been even slower to reflect the growing consciousness about racism and sexism.

The black protest movement forced the inclusion of Black History in the textbooks published during the late 1960's—in the form of inserted chapters, added paragraphs, and new illustrations. This patchwork approach was followed by efforts in the early 1970's to integrate the material into the body of the text. The situation regarding other non-white minorities and feminists has improved very little.

The first date given on the copyright page is the one that counts; subsequent revisions in the text (which later copyright dates indicate) generally fail to encompass a fundamental change in viewpoint. Even if the publisher were willing to make the costly revisions necessary, the editing out of viewpoints as pervasive as racism and sexism is virtually impossible.

(8) Examine the illustrations.

The range and type of the illustrations can serve as another indication of the textbook's viewpoint. Are blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and women of different groups shown at all? Compare the number of men, the number of white women and the number of Third World men and women in the illustrations. Also note if minorities are shown in roles that are secondary to those of white males.

(9) Watch for loaded words.

A word is loaded when it carries overtones of insult. Examples of loaded adjectives, usually racist, are: savage, primitive, conniving, lazy, superstitious, treacherous, wily, crafty, inscrutable, docile and backward.

Look for sexist language and adjectives that ridicule women and for the use of male pronoun to refer to both males and females. While the generic use of the word "man" was accepted in the past, its use today is an indication of a writer's lack of awareness.

(10) Note the heroes and heroines.

For many years textbooks showed only "safe" minority heroes and heroines—those who avoided serious conflict with the white establishment of their time. Minority groups today are insisting on the right to define their own heroes and heroines based on their own cultures and struggles for justice.